

## I Ching – The Book of Change

By Jürg Conzett

The *I Ching* is the oldest book in the world. The major part is attributed to Wen Wang, a sage from the 12th century BC and founder of the Chou Dynasty. But its origins are lost in the mythical past 6,000 years ago.

Undoubtly the *I Ching* is one of the most important books in world literature. It contains the wisdom of millenia, which is still valid for present-day man as well. It is thus no wonder that the two main branches of Chinese philosophy, Confucianism and Taoism, have their common roots here ... (Drawings by Silvia Oberholzer)

## 01 The Creative (heaven/heaven)



This is the rarest and most potent of all readings – the moment of creation. An unstable condition difficult to maintain; but while it lasts, the air is ripe with imagination, inspiration and energy.

You are now in position to begin a great activity. Believe in your dreams and persevere, and everything around you will flourish and be fully alive.

## 02 The Receptive (earth/earth)



Great receptivity attracts exceptional results. The receptive brings success through perseverance and responsive service, rather than through bold action. Thus, the wise person is strong but yielding, like a powerful but gentle mare.

The time has come to concentrate on realities rather than potentials – with how to respond to a situation rather than how to direct it. The symbol of a mare is used to signify this calm and supportive nature. A good mare lets herself be guided. Restrain the impulse to be assertive at this time, for if you try to direct things, you may only become confused and disoriented. Take things slowly and carefully.

### 03 Difficulty at the Beginning (thunder/water)



The birth of any new venture or relationship is an entry into the realm of the unknown. Everything is suddenly in motion; confusion can rise quickly. But chaos is a powerful force if you harness it properly.

Don't rush things. Take on helpers. There will be difficulties ahead. Gain strength; find courage. Just like a newly sprouted seed, the opportunity for development is real and present, but only by being resolute can a seedling break through earth's crust and grow to full stature. Keep going.

## 04 Youthful Folly (water/mountain)



Rebellious attitudes, characteristic of the young, rise to the surface. The image is of a fresh spring gushing at the foot of a mountain; or a foolish child trying to climb upon a table.

Just as a youth requires instruction, this situation indicates a need for help. In order to be ready to make the best of difficult times, it is important that you let education be a continuing part of your life. A strong mind and will are needed to carry a person through confusing times. The wise remember that experience.

Examine your attitude, for possible factors which might inhibit your openness. In general, we must let people live their own lives and learn their own lessons and give up trying to convince them that we are right.

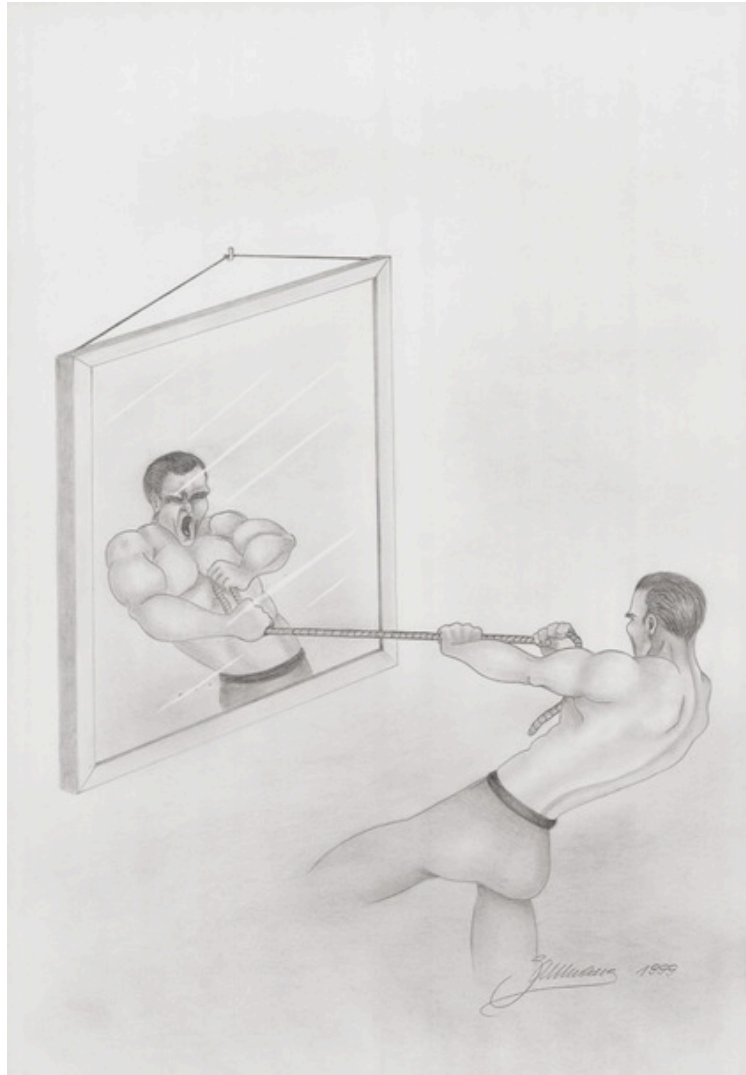
## 05 Waiting (heaven/water)



This reading suggests a situation like that of a man sitting by a hillside garden, seeds planted, waiting for a nourishing spring rain. The rain will come in its own time; you cannot make it come, neither by working nor by planning nor by wishing.

The rain is needed to sprout the seeds to grow the food which you need to nourish yourself and your loved ones. Proceed cautiously, but resolutely, with what you are doing. The situation calls for consistency and patience. Waiting is an essential skill; ultimately, patience is a powerful force.

## 06 Conflict (water/heaven)



Conflict often arises when a person who is convinced he or she is right meets with opposition. In such cases, the wise do not push things to the bitter end, because this only perpetuates bad will. Creative solutions which meet others halfway are more valuable. Conflicts in which one party is not sincere inevitably lead to distortions. In such situations, those of strong character and sincere beliefs keep a clear head, protect their own integrity and their own interests, even while seeking compromise. In times of conflict and turmoil, new ventures and new initiatives are to be avoided. When mud-slinging begins, it furthers one to be wearing old clothes.

## 07 The Army (water/earth)



The most successful general is not the one who triumphs on the battlefield, but the one able, through strength of discipline and inner power, to triumph without spilling blood. Likewise, in any large organisation the key virtues are discipline and caution.

This reading is symbolic of power held in check by the acceptance of a common discipline, and submission to a higher authority for the common good. Only when the state is economically prosperous can the army be strong. Only when the army is disciplined can the state be protected from disruptive outside forces.



## 08 Holding Together (earth/water)



Teamwork brings success. But high-level team performance is achieved only when a clear goal is shared by the right players on the right team at the right time.

A group forms its relationships in a delicate manner. All successful teams have a leader. If the leader is up to the challenge, the team will prosper. In political and business affairs, just as in basketball, it is hard to win without a strong centre.

Accept the restraints of the team if you wish to receive its benefits – otherwise go off on your own. In holding together with others, cling to your own principles, but be willing to subordinate your personal desires for the good of the group.

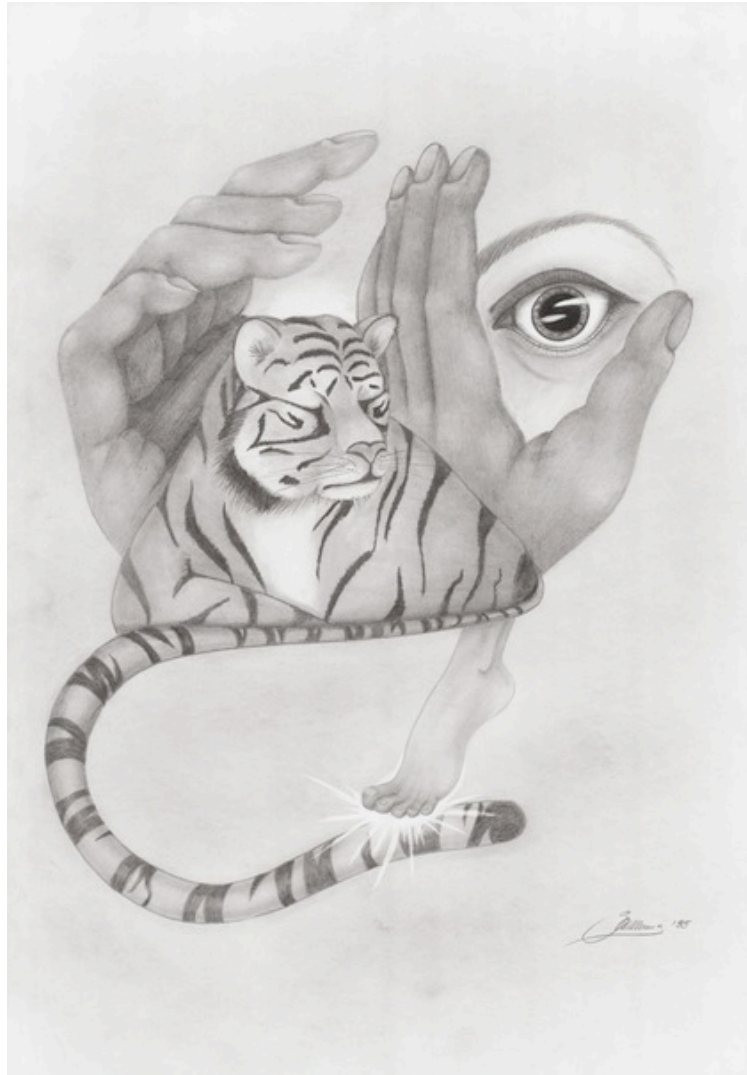
## 09 Small Taming (heaven/wind)



A gentle wind gathers the clouds, but still, no rain. Small forces predominate: the time for smooth and friendly persuasion. In the ebb and flow of events, there are always "low tides" – times when sweeping action is impossible or inappropriate, but when small matters can be attended to profitably, leading to bigger and better things later on.

When the tide is rolling in, by all means collect the shells. When circumstances dictate, that you can have little effect in large matters, friendly persuasion and subtle influence can prepare the way for strength in the future. Use your intuition to chart your long-term course, but avoid bold actions. Be wary of others' intentions if they hold the upper hand. Examine their sources of power, so as to discover subtle influences you may be able to exert upon them.

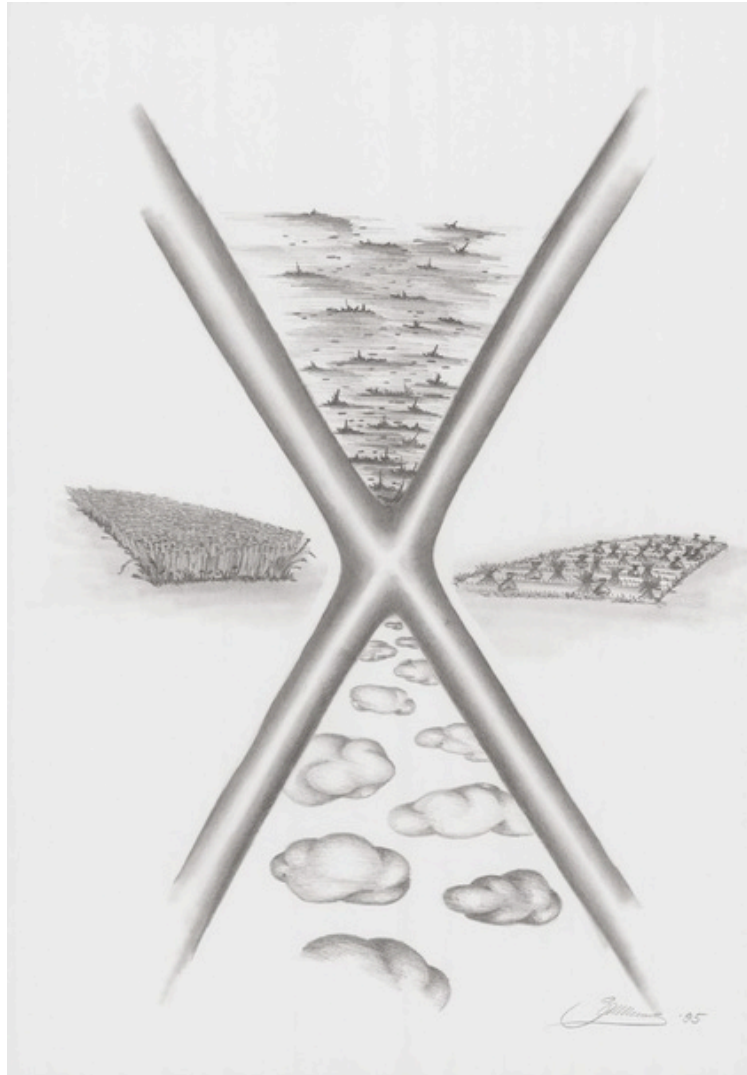
## 10 Treading (lake/heaven)



Treading carefully among sleeping tigers: thus able people find their way, and make progress even in difficult circumstances.

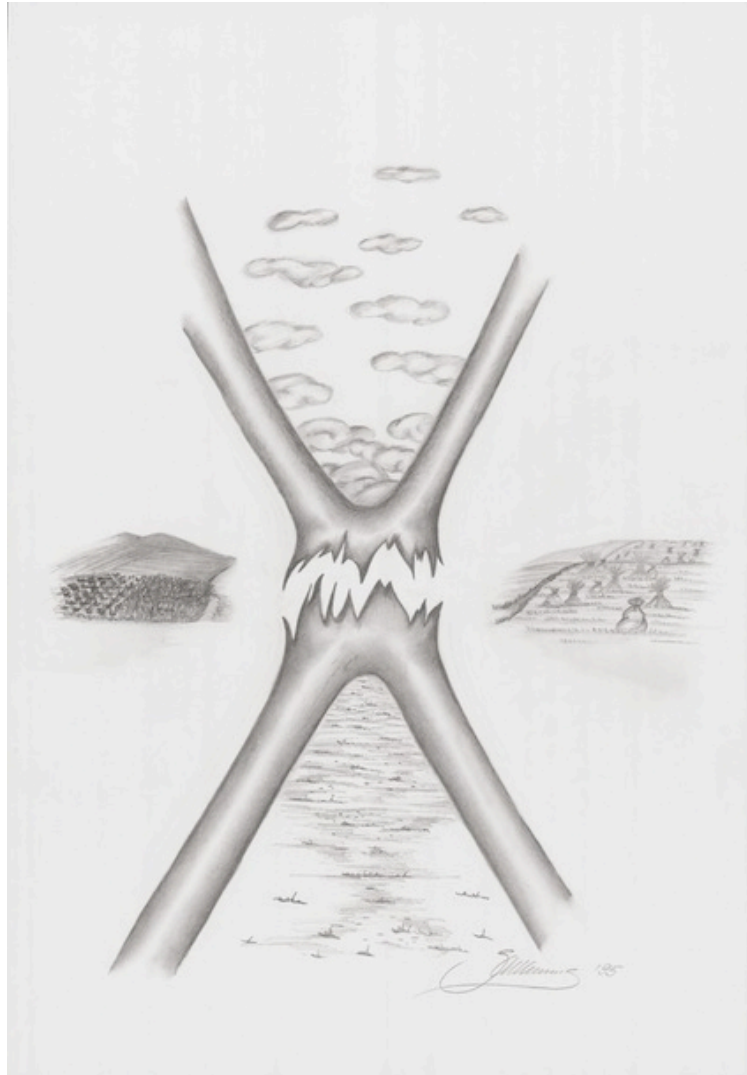
Consider your steps carefully when you are surrounded by forces of great strength. In the company of strong, brash people, rushing wildly ahead brings misfortune. Now is not the time for personal initiative; rather, try a little style and good humor. In the court of a powerful king, the jester often has more power than the prince.

## 11 Peace (heaven/earth)



In nature, this is a time of balanced forces, of heaven resting comfortably over the earth. In the affairs of men, peace comes when the good, strong and powerful are in exalted positions, and the weak, small and negative people are below them. A deep chaos abides in nature, but man, by carefully responding to the rhythms and cycles of the world around him, can find peace in the natural world. By planting the right crop in the right place in the right season, the farmer brings harmony to the nature.

## 12 Standstill (earth/heaven)



A period of stagnation: the waters are muddied, and a sluggish disorder prevails. The inferior (mud) is on the rise, the superior (clarity) on the decline. In such times, the wise man takes shelter in his own integrity, and looks deeply within until things improve.

During periods of stagnation, inferior elements prevail. When the inmates are overrunning the asylum, summon up your fortitude, and persevere. Concentrate on attending to personal affairs with a quiet dignity, even if that means forfeiting short-term gains. Desiring to change a situation too quickly often creates inner conflict. By accepting hardship, while striving to maintain integrity, you are preparing for future growth. Or, as numerous commentaries on the *I Ching* say, "A seed of prosperity is often hidden inside the husk of misfortune."

### 13 Fellowship (fire/heaven)



When communal bonds unite a group, great success is possible. But such bonds can develop only when personal interests are subjugated to goals which carry in them the essential virtues of humanity. The broader the basis for action, the greater the good will be.

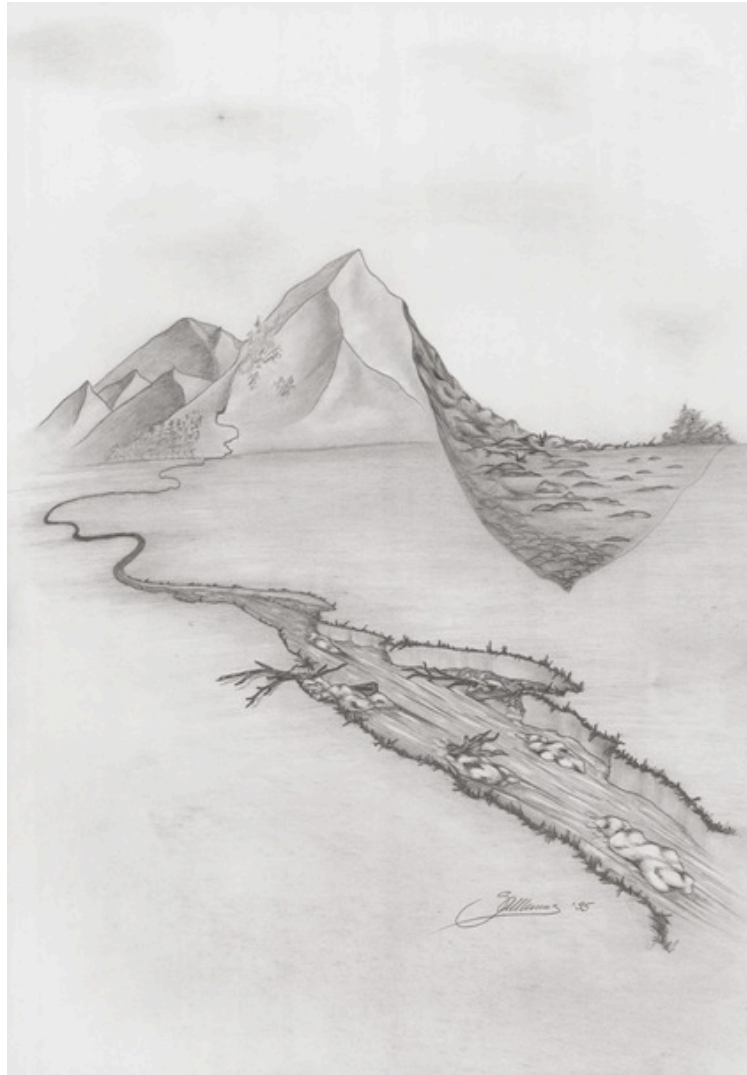
Learn to respect the strength in diversity, for a community's true power lies not in its numbers, but in the diverse skills and resources of its members.

## 14 Great Possession (heaven/fire)



Wealth, abundance, possession in great measure! The person in power shines like a blazing torch! At the core of this success lies unselfishness and modesty, for it is the tendency of a yielding nature to bind powerful forces to it. Great possession can lead to an accumulation of pride and arrogance. You must combat this natural tendency in order to continue to prosper – particularly in order to administer your affairs favourably.

## 15 Modesty (mountain/earth)



It is the way of the world to fill the empty cup. Modesty is often rewarded in human affairs, just as valleys are filled by the erosion of great mountains.

Regardless of your position, modesty is a very positive attribute. The most successful people are those who know how to bring each situation into balance by reducing that which is too great, and adding to that which is too little. Such a person craves not power, but stable relations among men.



## 16 Enthusiasm (earth/thunder)



Enormous creative energy is unleashed by enthusiasm. This energy is like powerful music which inspires great numbers of people, loosening old constraints and generating new opportunities. The power of enthusiasm is symbolised by music and dance. Enthusiasm within a large group generates a special kind of electricity. When a crowd is "charged," the singer scales new heights, and life becomes its own reward. Who is not in awe of thunder?

Arouse the passionate support of others, while adjusting your ideas and plans to suit their needs. In this way you can fill your sails with the mighty wind of strong popular sentiment. Joy in the work is fuel for the fire.

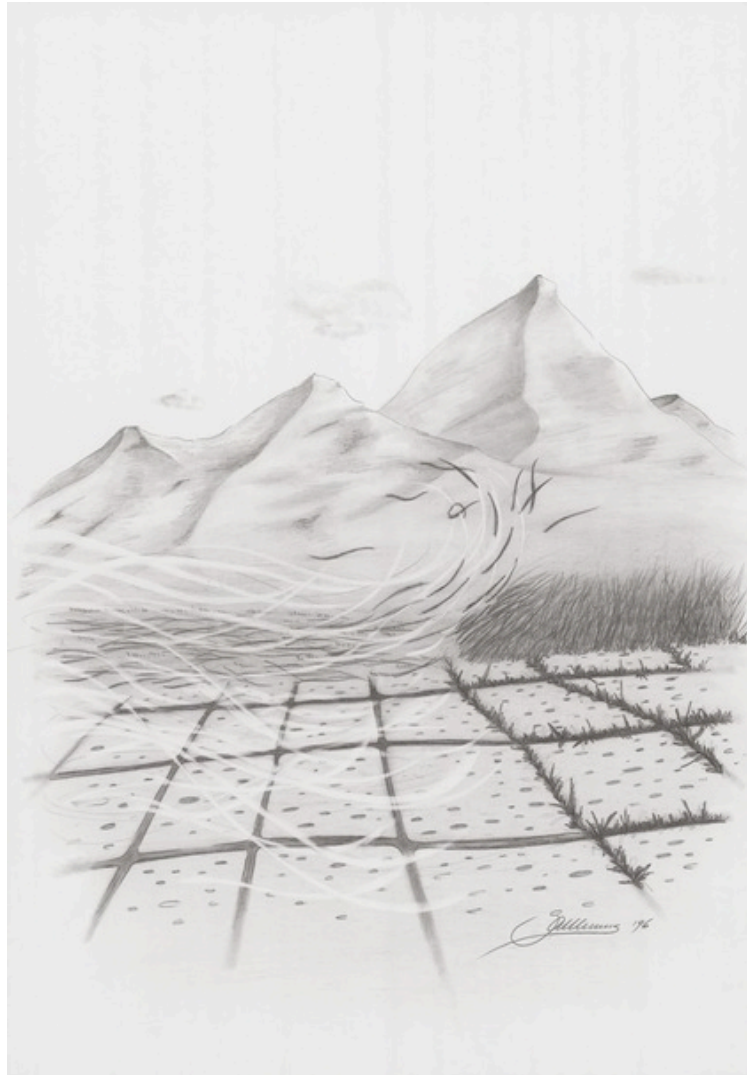
## 17 Following (thunder/lake)



Adaptability brings supreme success. You may not be able to change the direction of the wind, but by frequently adjusting your sails, you can still arrive at your destination. Those who would acquire a following must speak the language of their followers. Those who would be loved must become the imagined lover of their beloved. Those who would prosper must bend with the pressures of the world.

In matters of principle, stand firm. In the affairs of humanity, change is constant, and old ideas are continually discarded in favour of new ones. Only by adapting to the demands of the time can a great leader emerge. Only by adjusting to changing circumstances can one prosper in the world.

## 18 Work on the Decayed (wind/mountain)



In the world of human affairs, indulgence and corruption grow like weeds in an untended garden; they must be faced squarely, and rooted out through bold action. The time has come to become lean and efficient. Decay must be arrested now, before the whole garden is lost. Fighting decay, sloppiness and corruption is not a simple matter; all steps must be evaluated carefully, and planning must precede action.

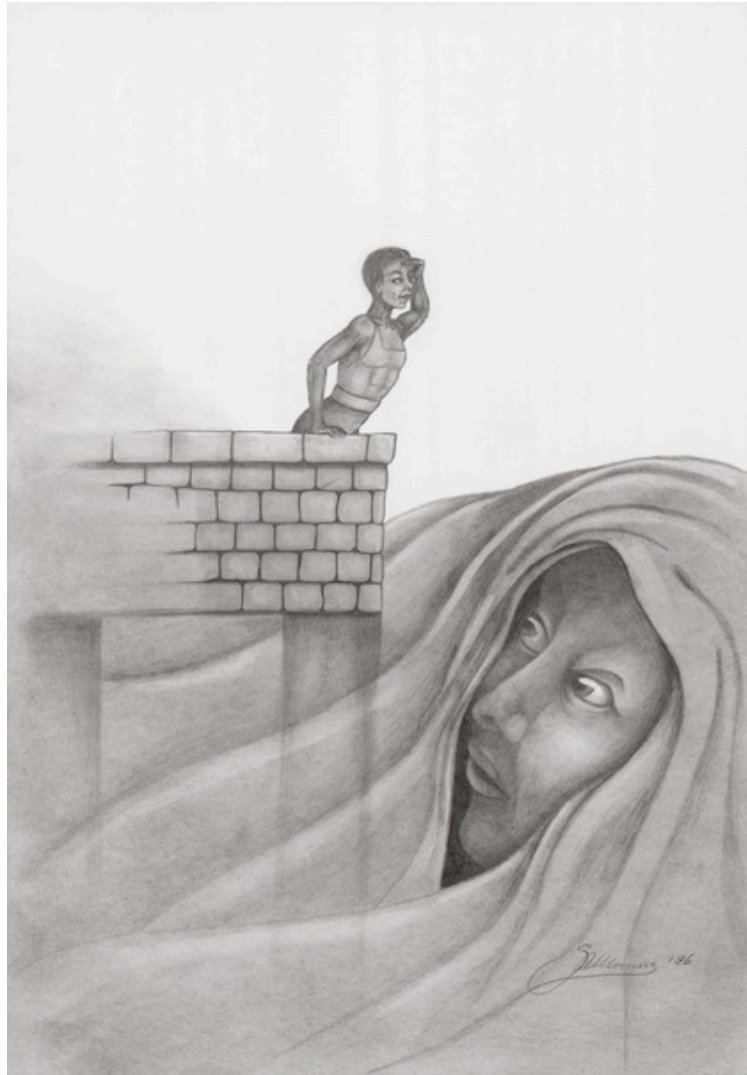
## 19 Approach (lake/earth)



The period before the approach of spring is a most auspicious time. The promise of good times ahead seems inevitable, and there is vitality in the air. Like a snake emerging from hibernation, negative forces are only just beginning to stir.

Act now, for at some point this ripe opportunity for advancement will be reversed. No spring lasts forever. It's always wise to stay alert and note the changing signs of the times. Spring is always the season of new relationships. In the bounty of good times, new bonds are formed effortlessly. Relationships born in spring can serve well to warm the following autumn.

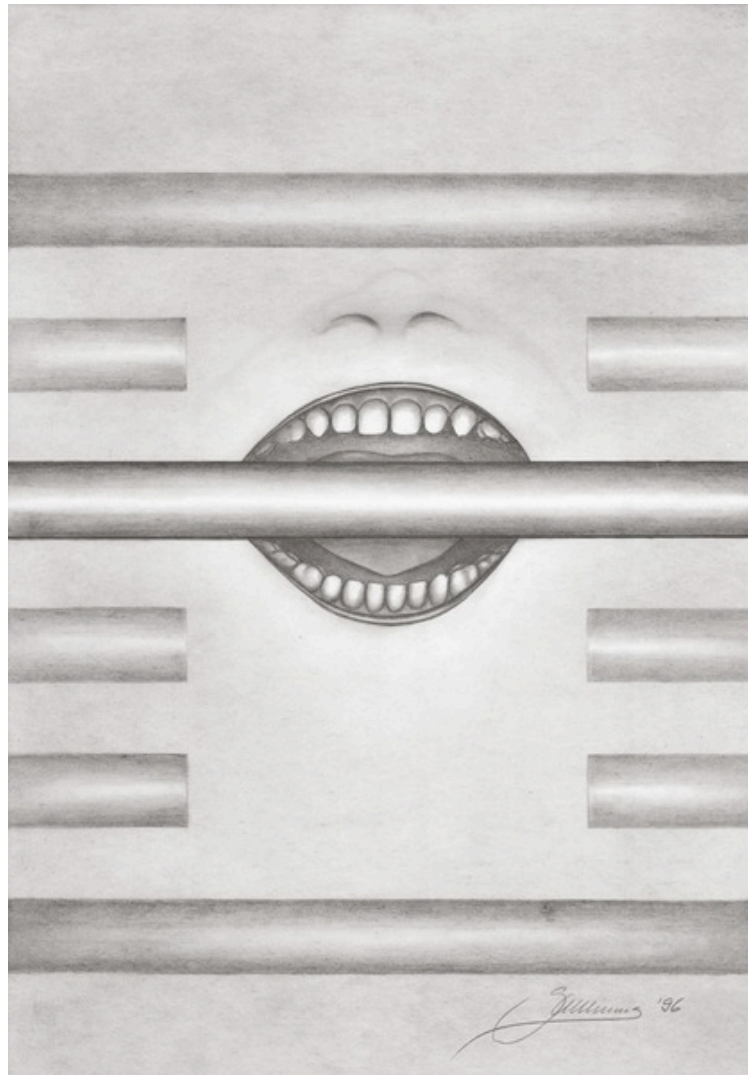
## 20 Contemplation (earth/wind)



During the period between great events, stillness and contemplation are in order. Only by observing and absorbing the true way of things – by apprehending the rhythms and cycles which guide all creation – can we discover the laws which apply to our own life. Shallow wells rarely strike water, and shallow minds often come up empty. The ability to keep still deepens resolve, and attracts good fortune.

Discern the difference between substance and artifice within yourself. Closely examine yourself and your situation, not just with the thought of discovering truth, but with the idea of concentrating your personal power. As a result of profound contemplation, a hidden force emanates from us.

## 21 Biting Through (thunder/fire)



The ability to mete out corrective discipline, when it is needed, is an essential trait of all true leaders. But those who dispense punishment must, above all, be honest – with others, and with themselves.

Though your actions be vigorous, they must not be hasty, severe, or arbitrary. Be sure to carefully consider all the circumstances. In the case of a serious disruption of relations or events, you must forgive, but not forget.

## 22 Grace (fire/mountain)



A splashy sunset bathes the mountains in a soft radiance; the light of a full moon dances on the surface of a rippling river: these are the images of grace in the natural world. Grace is not the all-powerful force, nor the essential or fundamental thing. In the performing arts, grace often arises from adherence to form: the dancer becoming the form of the dance, the musician giving life to the form of a musical score.

## 23 Splitting Apart (earth/mountain)



In every life, all is not what it seems. The image: a hall of mirrors. Intrigues are multiplying like summer flies, and there are rumors of discontent. It is the time of illusion, of disintegration, deception. A season of the witch.

When you find yourself trapped in a hall of mirrors, sometimes it is necessary to retrace your steps. Return to the familiar; take solace in what is firm and secure. There is no blame in holding back; indeed, it is your responsibility to keep your strength. Learn to choose the proper moments for action, thereby avoiding futile effort. Be attentive also for changes that signal a time to retreat. In the realm of personal relations, discovering illusion is always painful, and confusing. When in the midst of such a period, it is wise to avoid undertaking any bold new moves.



## 24 Return (thunder/earth)



This is the turning point which brings success, the turning of darkness back towards the direction of the light. This period is associated with the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, the day when darkness decreases.

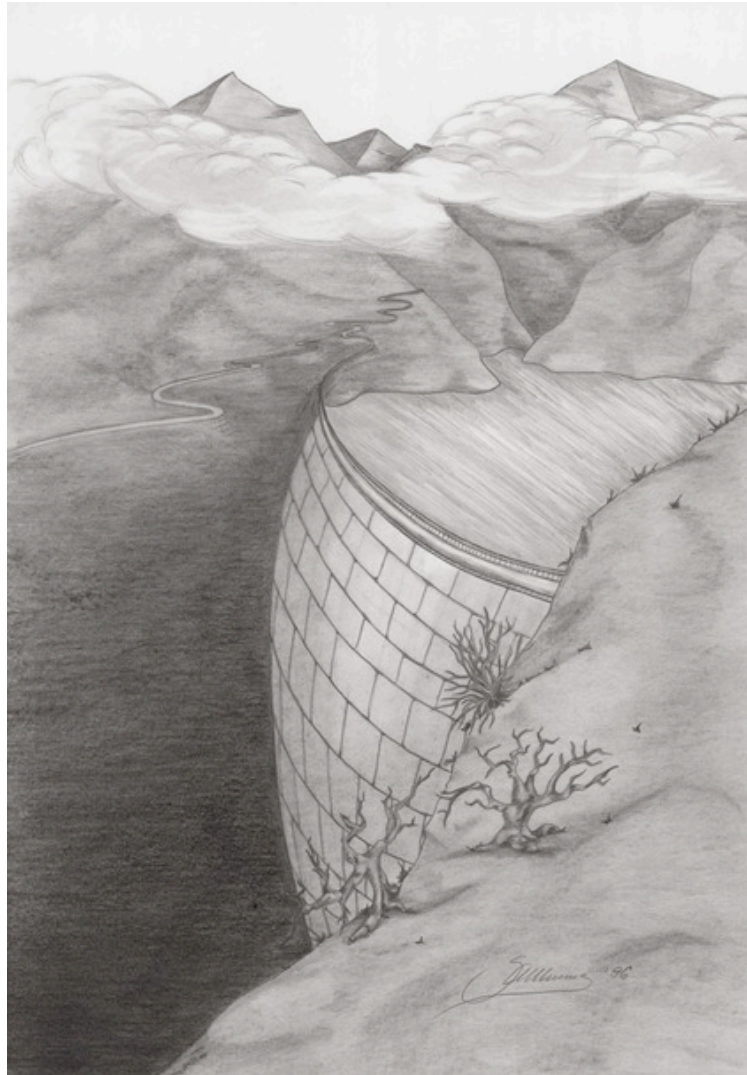
But don't move too fast. The new momentum is just at its beginning; the germination process must be supported by adequate rest, so that your energy will not be spent prematurely.

## 25 Innocence (thunder/heaven)



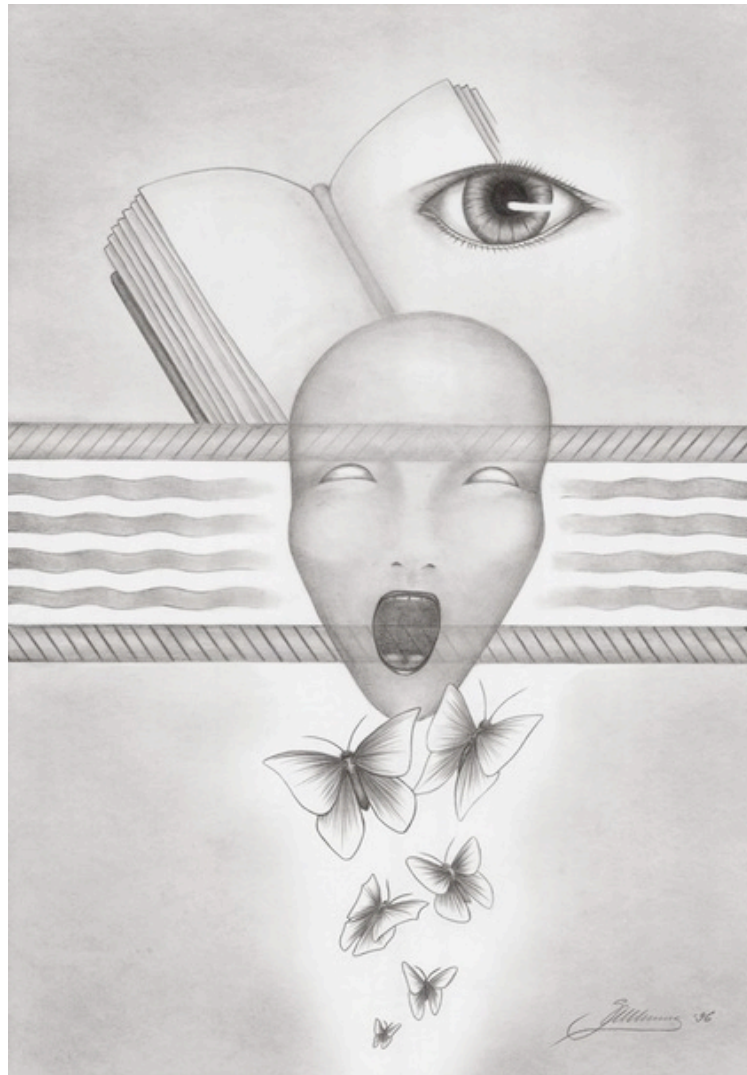
Innocence implies harmlessness, openness and intentions which are unsullied by ulterior motives. The state of innocence has less to do with age than attitude; innocence springs from a heart which remains open to joy and wonder. The hallmark of innocence is a willingness to treat all creatures with compassion and respect.

## 26 Great Taming (heaven/mountain)



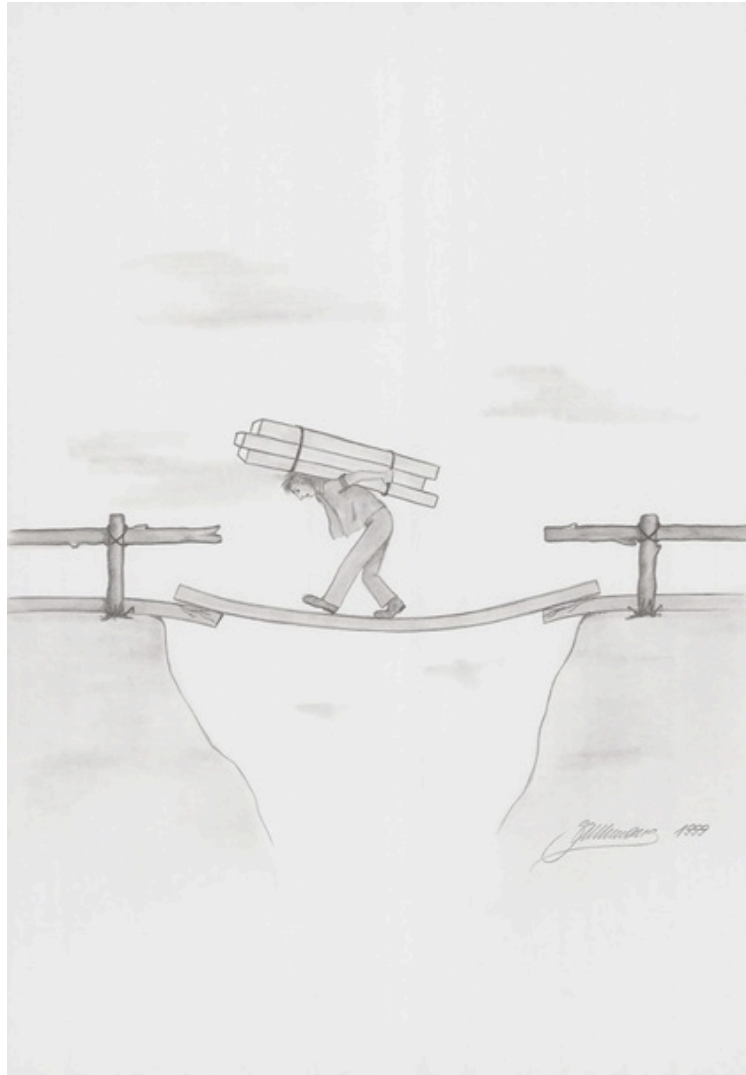
Great power becomes even greater when it is harnessed, and held in check. Like a river which has been dammed, the restraint of power produces enormous potential. This reading indicates that you have considerable reserves of energy and support to draw upon. This is the right time to nurture creativity by collecting and organising your good ideas and plans.

## 27 Mouth Corners (thunder/mountain)



Nourishment refers to much more than a healthy diet. It is the care-giving function of man. Eating properly implies care for oneself; providing healthy meals in the home is a sign of caring for the family. You can know people by observing what they choose to nourish in their own lives. Do they feed and develop their own bodies? Do they cultivate their spirits, their intellects, their moral values? Do they nourish (that is, care for) those around them?

## 28 Great Preponderance (wind/lake)



A person standing in a sagging old mine shaft feels the earth begin to tremble: it is time for quick, instinctive action and nimble footwork. There can be success, but extraordinary measures are called for.

When the roof is collapsing, run first, choose later. Extraordinary times bring out the best and worst in people. Natural disasters bring with them stories of great heroism – but also looting and rioting. When great weight is on the world, powerful moments present opportunities to make great gains. This may be the moment you have been waiting for. Although the current challenge may seem to be more than you can handle, remember that a flood reaches its highwater mark for only a few brief moments, and then begins to subside. Action must be taken now. Dare to win.

## 29 The Abysmal Water (water/water)



Exposure to danger brings good fortune to those who move beyond it. Like rafters passing through white-water rapids, those faced with serious challenges must remain alert; they must take all available precautions; and above all, must keep going forward. The positive side of danger is that it offers an excellent chance to cleanse the senses and strengthen the spirit. Surviving danger brings with it tremendous reinvigoration, and sharpens the eye and mind for future challenges. It is reckless to court danger, but critical to inner development not to shrink from it either. Those who respond to danger most effectively are those who are able to establish an inner bubble of calm in the midst of the action.

### 30 The Clinging (fire/fire)



Flames cling to their source of fuel in order to keep the fire burning. Likewise, in the human world, everything that radiates light or love is dependent upon something else. Through these dependencies we discover that everything is related. But fire is also a symbol of liberation. Paradoxically, by clinging to what is right and proper, we gain inner freedom. Given perseverance on your part, this reading indicates success.

In spite of challenges, cling to what is luminous in yourself, in others, and in life itself, never forsaking your belief in what is right.

### 31 Influence (mountain/lake)



The attraction of opposites is a powerful and fundamental force. The image of this reading is that of the attraction between a young man and a young woman in the courtship stage. Consistency is important in matters of mutual attraction, for this is what separates courtship from seduction.

If you are by nature an instigator, it is good to take the initiative. But you must remain sensitive, and highly principled, and avoid the temptation to be overly manipulative. Let the power of mutual attraction pull you along. Remaining open to the forces of attraction brings good fortune. Closing yourself to them heralds the death of the soul. Learn to yield to the natural tugs and pulls of the world of the heart.

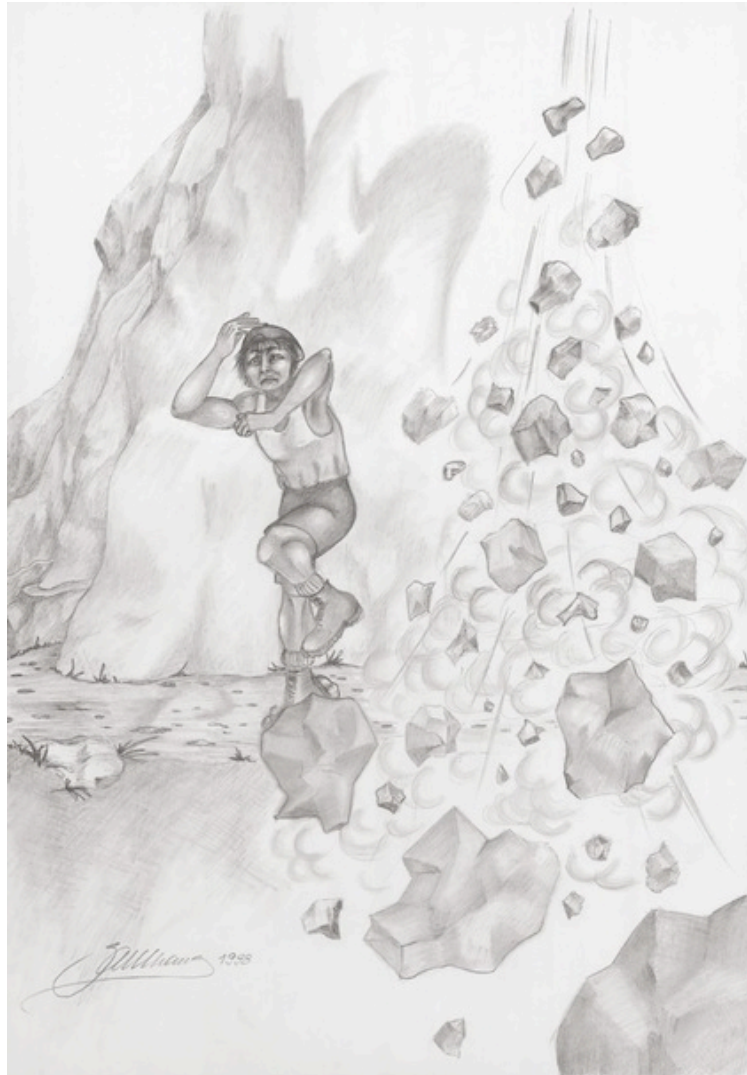


## 32 Duration (wind/thunder)



Endurance is fostered when inner constancy is coupled with external flexibility. Long-distance runners must adapt readily to changing conditions, while maintaining an inner determination and strength of purpose. True endurance is not based on rigidity, for endurance implies movement, not immobilisation. Only by adapting to change can we stay in the race; but only by deepening our sense of purpose can we develop the fortitude to win it. Continuity is achieved through movement, not by keeping still. That which has ceased to grow is close to death.

### 33 Retreat (mountain/heaven)



All worthy goals meet resistance of some kind. When negative forces predominate, a well-timed retreat is necessary in order to stay on the path to success. Strategic retreat is not to be confused with escape or surrender. Successful retreat demands quick and nimble movement – taking up a new position before you are damaged severely by the current situation.

You are not admitting defeat by such action. Attend to small details while allowing yourself time to contemplate the whole picture. Be creative; not all progress follows a straight line. Waves of progress are, by their nature, short-lived. Learn to attune yourself to the up-and-down wave cycles of life. When the wave is behind you, ride it in; when it's not, lie low.

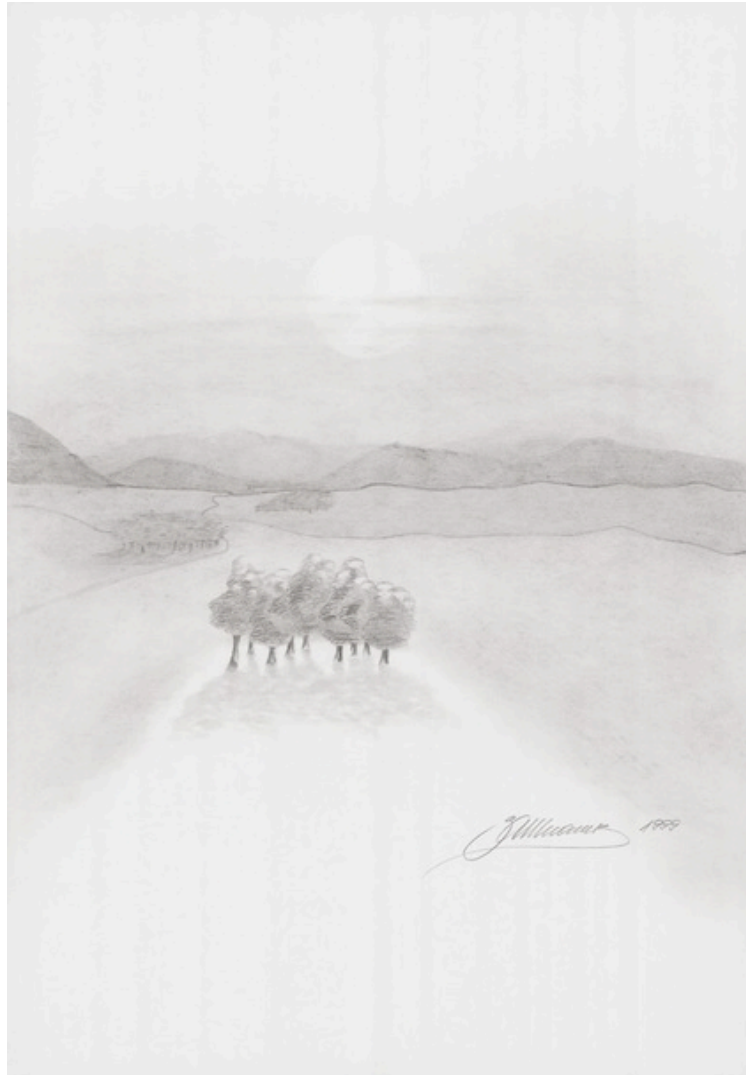
### 34 Great Power (heaven/thunder)



Strength, power and movement in your life is indicated! The image is of a ram who has knocked down a fence to free himself from captivity.

This reading points to a time when a great force comes into its own and achieves power. When a great leader comes into power, his or her personal strength usually has already peaked. Great strength has been required in climbing to the mountaintop, but once at the summit, the support of others is needed to maintain position. Arrogance is its own undoing.

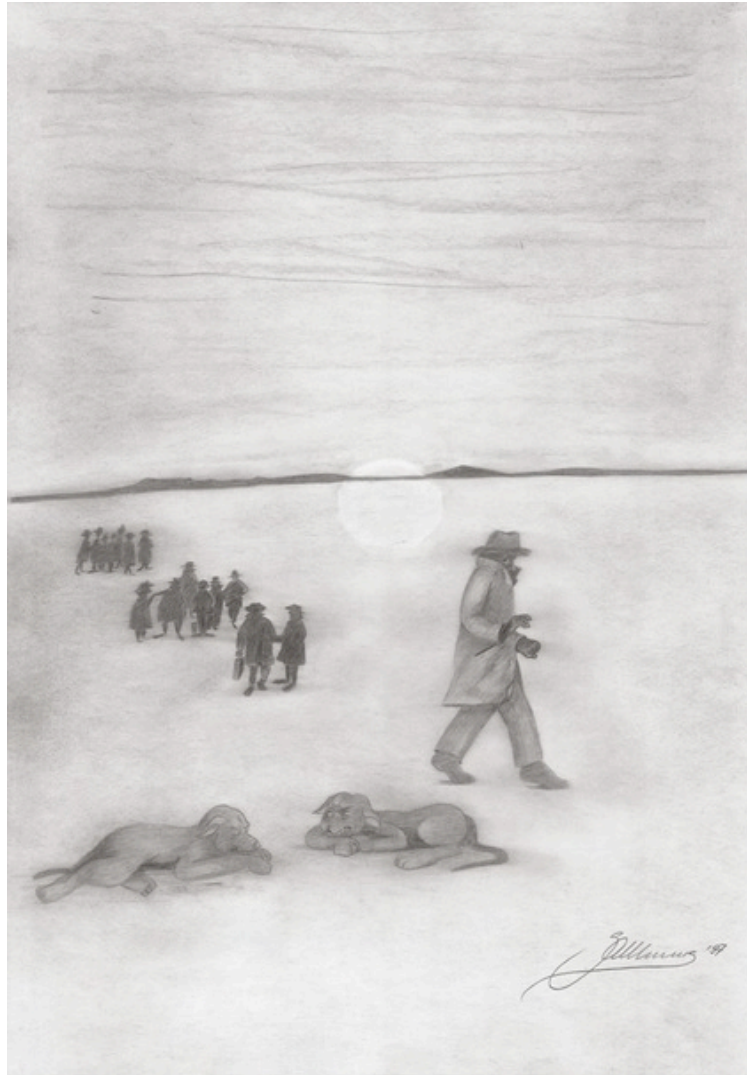
### 35 Progress (earth/fire)



What has been weak is steadily ascending, and by gaining a prominent position, becomes more powerful. The image is the light of the rising sun, which at first appears dimly through the mists. But this weak light later radiates with powerful clarity. Progress is made when those in subordinate positions make peace with those above, and in so doing create a natural means for their talents and abilities to become prominent.

Don't forget that goodness in human nature is like the dim but beautiful early morning light. It can easily be obscured by greed – just as the morning light can be swallowed by the fog.

### 36 Darkening of the Light (fire/earth)



There are times when it is wise to become invisible. The image is of fresh darkness, the period after sundown when the light has gone. There is still much activity left over from the light of day, and movements in the outer world are at their most dangerous level.

Whatever you do, don't let yourself be swept along on the current of conventional wisdom when dangerous uncertainties exist. Do not needlessly awaken dormant forces of opposition. During dark, unsettled periods, it is best to step gingerly around the sleeping dogs.

### 37 The family (fire/wind)



The ideal team works in an environment where healthy relationships are nurtured. Strong leadership is essential, but a strong team is dependent upon every member. Trust, shared responsibilities and good communication within the team is essential. The functional family is a team which symbolises the ideal of human interdependence, and has long provided a firm foundation for society. The healthy family is a microcosm of society and the native soil in which ethical values take root and grow. The power which bonds a family together is the feminine principle – gentleness and receptivity. Relationships in all kinds of teams are improved through cultivation of this principle.

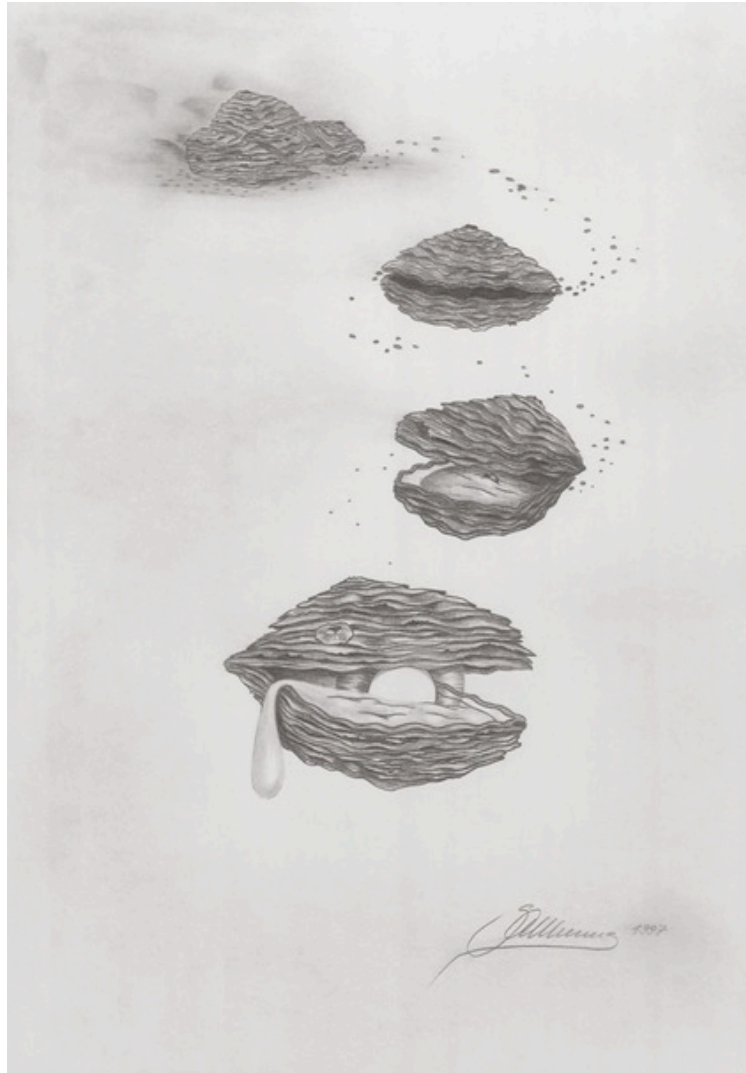
### 38 Opposition (lake/fire)



When two sisters marry, they grow apart, since their allegiances lie with new families. Though they will remain close enough to successfully deal with minor problems and share minor interests, they will be unable to undertake any great projects together. Divergent natures and interests bring opposition into the world of human affairs. When opposition drifts into alienation and enmity, no good results. But when opposition takes the form of healthy competition, the result will be positive.

Even when opposing forces serve to make a situation seem stagnant or futile, remember: there are creative possibilities inherent in polarities. One is reminded of the interplay of opposites that is fundamental for the creation of life itself.

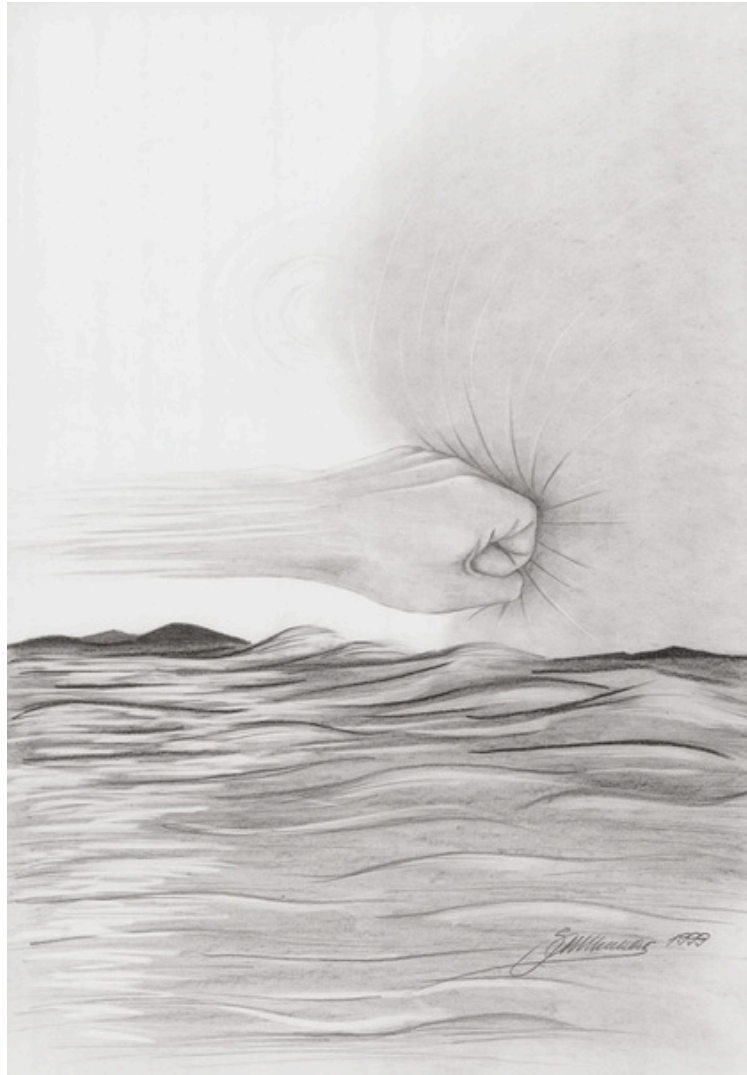
### 39 Obstraction (mountain/water)



Have obstractions or temporary obstacles been blocking your way? In the course of trying to reach a goal or fulfill a personal ambition, obstacles inevitably present themselves. This is not always a bad thing. The obstacles pointed to here are not permanent, yet they are in the way. As when a large rock falls in the road, the best course of action is usually to go around it, rather than to try to move it out of the way. Temporary obstacles must be seen for what they are.



## 40 Deliverance (water/thunder)



After a time of extreme tension, a period of new clarity and deliverance follows. The image is that of a thunderstorm which clears the air and suddenly reduces atmospheric tension. In its wake, new color and life bursts forth in all the fields. Great clarity of purpose and renewed vigour can follow the healing of old wounds. But care must be taken not to re-open these old wounds by moving too quickly.

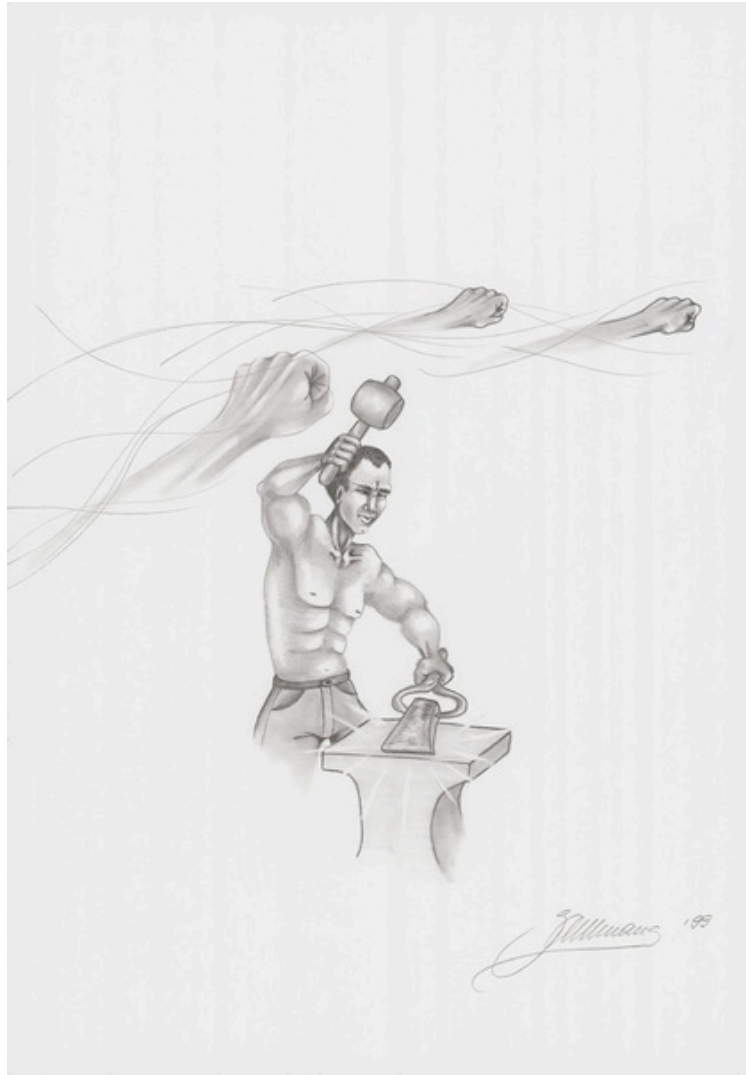
In the same way, it is important to return to normalcy first before moving ahead with new plans. Breathe a sigh of relief, but don't relax completely. It would be a mistake to re-awaken the sleeping dogs of the past.

## 41 Decrease (lake/mountain)



To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. Increase and decrease are part of the natural cycle of all life. There is no disgrace in material decrease. The inner strength that comes from suffering through misfortune can be balanced by an equal and opposite increase in inner strength and insight. The mountain lake evaporates to form the clouds that drop the rain which nurtures the surrounding forest.

## 42 Increase (thunder/wind)



Substantial progress is easy in a time of increasing prosperity, as long as you take advantage of the opportunity while it lasts and keep the interests of others in mind. Periods of general increase are often of short duration.

Leadership in times of opportunity involves commitment to the needs of those of lower rank. Only by realising that to lead is to serve, can a leader fortify his or her position and bring about a lasting increase in prosperity. When opportunities arise, supreme good fortune comes to those who act swiftly and boldly. If you aspire to a position of true prominence, the most enduring strategy is to work to raise the tide of your entire company or community.

### 43 Breakthrough (heaven/lake)



The persistence of evil is a constant in human affairs; just when it is thought to have been eradicated, up it will come, sprouting through some crack in the pavement of decent society. Breakthrough, in the context of this reading, refers to the resolute struggle against evil – whether in one's social or professional life, or in one's own soul. In either case, definite rules must be followed for the struggle to succeed. The first rule: there is no compromise with evil. Negative actions must be identified openly for what they are, and openly discredited. The second: one cannot resist negativity on its own terms. Even a single loose bolt can rattle the entire engine.

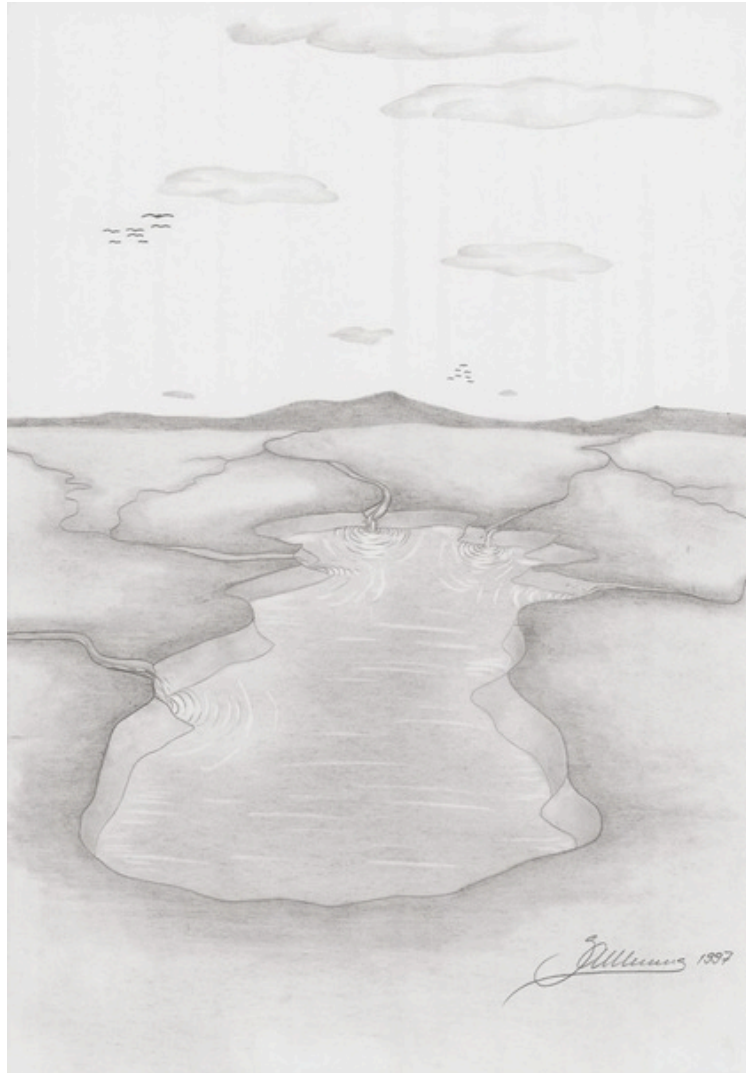
## 44 Coming to Meet (wind(heaven))



A coming to meet of disparate forces may not be what it seems. An apparently harmless, but potentially dangerous, element has attracted attention to itself and seduced a stronger one.

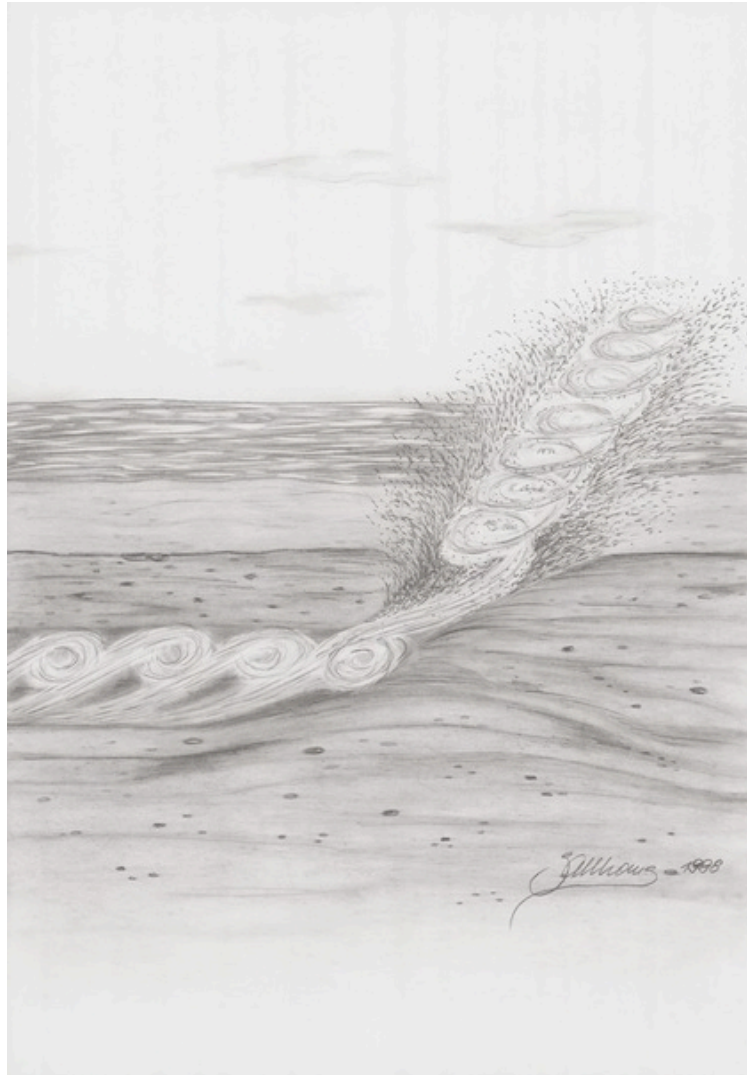
Be wary of temptations which become available because of one's own ranking or position, or one's relationship to someone in a higher position. Often the only way to combat such temptations is to snip them in the bud before they can flower.

## 45 Gathering Together (earth/lake)



Gathering together in human affairs brings stable, ordered and durable conditions. Obviously, this is an auspicious time for great undertakings. But the powerful guiding force of a shared vision projected by a strong leader is essential to hold the forces of unity together. The image for this situation is that of a lake filling with water. Just as the fullness of the lake can bring good fortune to all in its sphere, it can also overflow, leading to calamity. A time of gathering together is a time of greatness. But that greatness can be both positive and negative. Everything is magnified when masses of people meet for a single purpose.

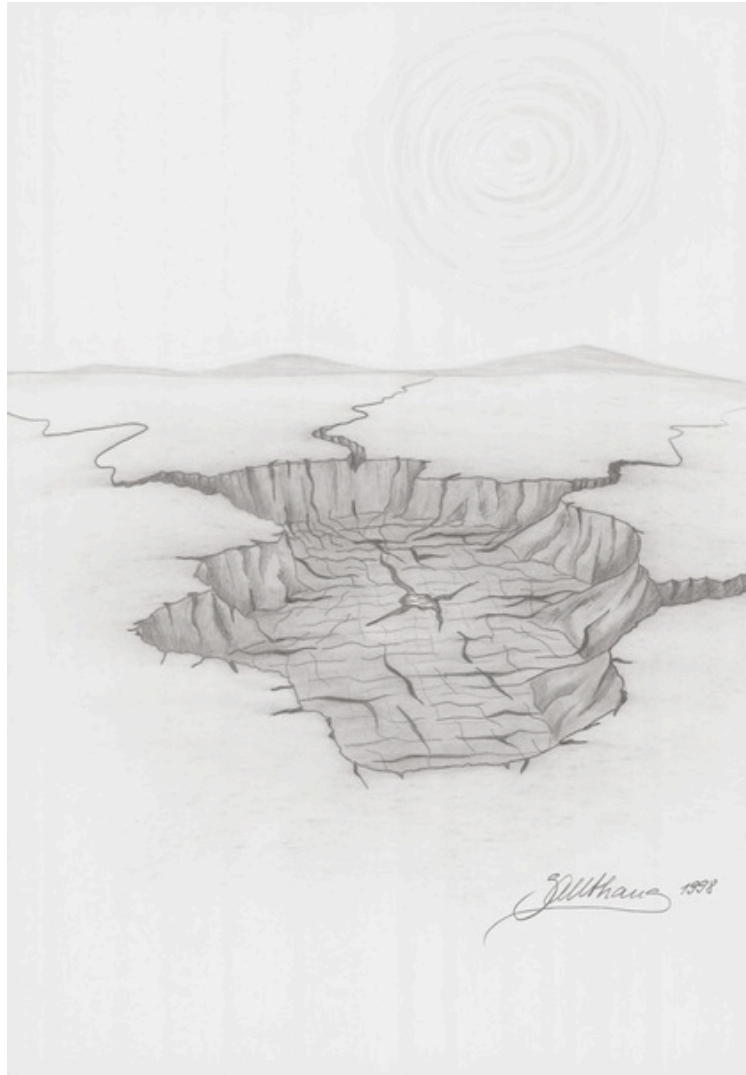
## 46 Pushing Upward (wind/earth)



Advancement is represented by the forces of growth in springtime, when new plant life pushes upward through the earth's crust. The emphasis is on upward motion, from obscurity to influence. A wise person, in harmony with fate, is sensitive but determined.

Make a sincere effort to apply resolute effort against the forces of inertia in life, and good fortune will follow.

## 47 Oppression (water/lake)

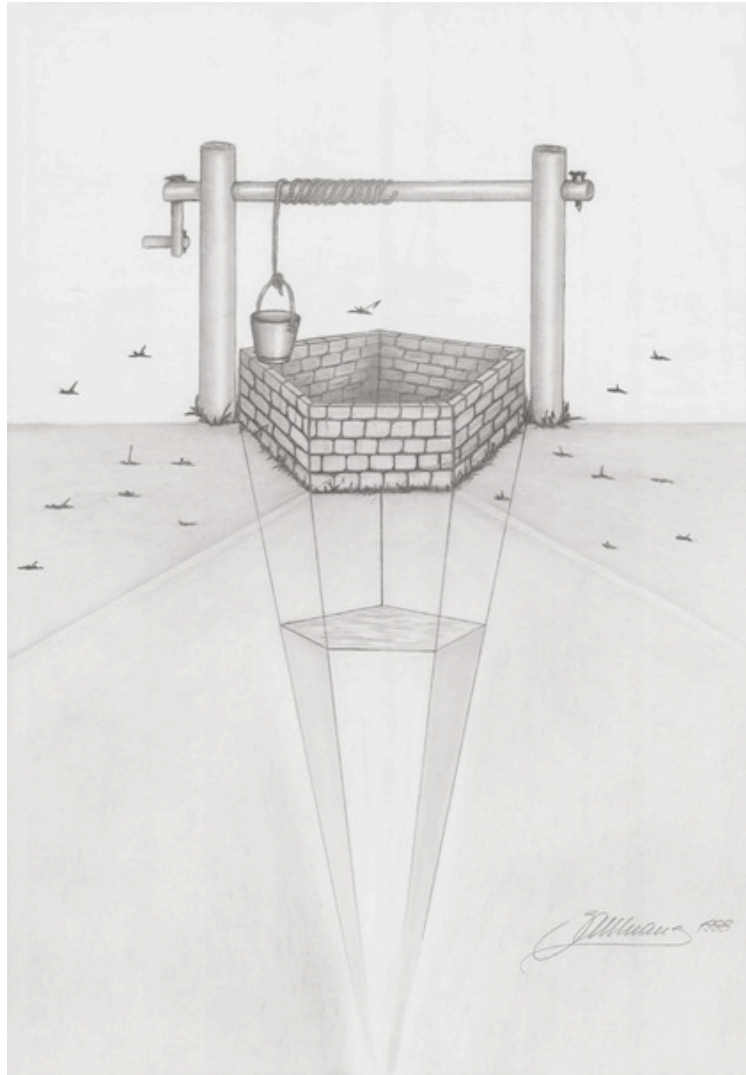


The image: a dried up lake bed with nettlesome crows stalking the shoreline. Hard times shrivel our spirits, and bring out a multitude of "crows" (troublesome worries). In a sense, there is no such thing as failure. There is only sweet and sour reality, and more is learned from the sour, oftentimes, than from the sweet. For failure, hard as it may be to swallow, opens the blinds to the real world.

Keep in mind that failure – the final taboo in modern society – is but one part of the inevitable cycle of life for those who dare to live fully and completely. Never to fail at all is to fail in the biggest way – avoiding risk altogether.



## 48 The Well (wind/water)



Throughout various cultures and political systems of the world, the well has served as a universal symbol for that which sustains life and provides a constant, inexhaustible source of nourishment for mankind. For the life-force, in other words. Like the well, human nature is the same around the world. The passage of time cannot add to its essential dimensions, nor take anything away. Still, a well can be deepened to produce clearer, cleaner water.

Beware of shallow thinking; it, like a little learning, can be dangerous. The image of the well suggests that with depth comes clarity. If you do not lower your bucket to the depth, you might well come up empty.

## 49 Revolution (fire/lake)



The image of revolution is fire on the lake – the fire evaporates the water, the water puts out the fire. Change causes conflict; conflict brings about change. This reading refers to that time in the cycle of human affairs when things need stirring up. Revolutions must proceed according to certain fixed laws in order to succeed. They must begin at the right moment, gather support from a broad-base of people, be guided by sincere and capable leaders and – most important of all – must address a real need. Revolutions point to a time when chaos is created out of order. It is important to realise that not all order is good, not all chaos bad. Chaos, in fact, is an integral part of the way of things. In periods of drought, even wild storms are preferable to yet another boring sunny day.

## 50 The Cauldron (wind/fire)



Sooner or later, good comes to those who do good; joy comes to those who bring humour to others; opportunity comes to those who persist in their dreams. Rejuvenation is a returning to innate desires – and a recharging of batteries through the fulfillment. Healthy, regular sustenance is important, as symbolised by the cauldron, which provides nourishment to all. Rejuvenation simply means that men and women of talent and insight are being properly nourished and valued. When society is functioning properly, such people are supported, and encouraged to contribute to their best abilities.

## 51 Arousing (thunder/thunder)



A jarring shake! First fear, then a sharpened, clearer vision of life: that is the process of change implied in this reading. When overtaken by crisis, the wise learn to search their hearts for inner strengths, and face the world with courage. We tend to think of shock only in the context of unpleasant events. We can also be jarred, however, by the sudden release of tension which comes with unexpected success.

## 52 The Keeping Still (mountain/mountain)



Rest is an essential part of growth and movement. The most restful person may not be the one who sleeps twelve hours a day, but the one able to grab catnaps while cruising at 500 miles-per-hour at 35,000 ft on an airplane. The image is of the spine, which serves as a switchboard for all the nerves of the body which mediate movement. When the spine is kept flexible and healthy through proper rest and relaxation, even active movement can be undertaken without strain.

Treat your innate spark of vitality as if it were a candle in the wind – protecting it as though it were your only light in a dark forest on a moonless night.

## 53 Development (mountain/wind)



Like an ancient old-growth forest – where the subtle play of light, texture and shadows is the product of a process measured in centuries and inches – most things of lasting value develop gradually, at their own pace. The principle of gradual development applies also to human relationships. For love, marriage and business relationships to endure, progress must be slow but steady: slow enough to allow for the bonds to knit properly; steady enough to move in the right direction.

## 54 The Marrying Maiden (lake/thunder)



Affection is the basis of all lasting relationships, but must be channeled properly in order for each relationship to bring satisfaction to both parties.

## 55 Abundance (fire/thunder)



A time of abundance comes into full flower when the powers of a great leader are at their peak. The situation is like that of the sun at midday – a high noon of clarity, insight and progress. Such peak periods are often brief. When in the midst of a period of abundance, it furthers one to show benevolence, and to share the fruit of one's good fortune.

Think of good deeds now as a hedge against times of scarcity in the future.



## 56 The Wanderer (mountain/fire)



Travel is ruled by the twin houses of mystery and discovery. Each new day is launched on a fresh landscape, one which reaches out to grab our full attention. The fire on the mountain walks on as long as it burns.

## 57 The Gentle (wind/wind)



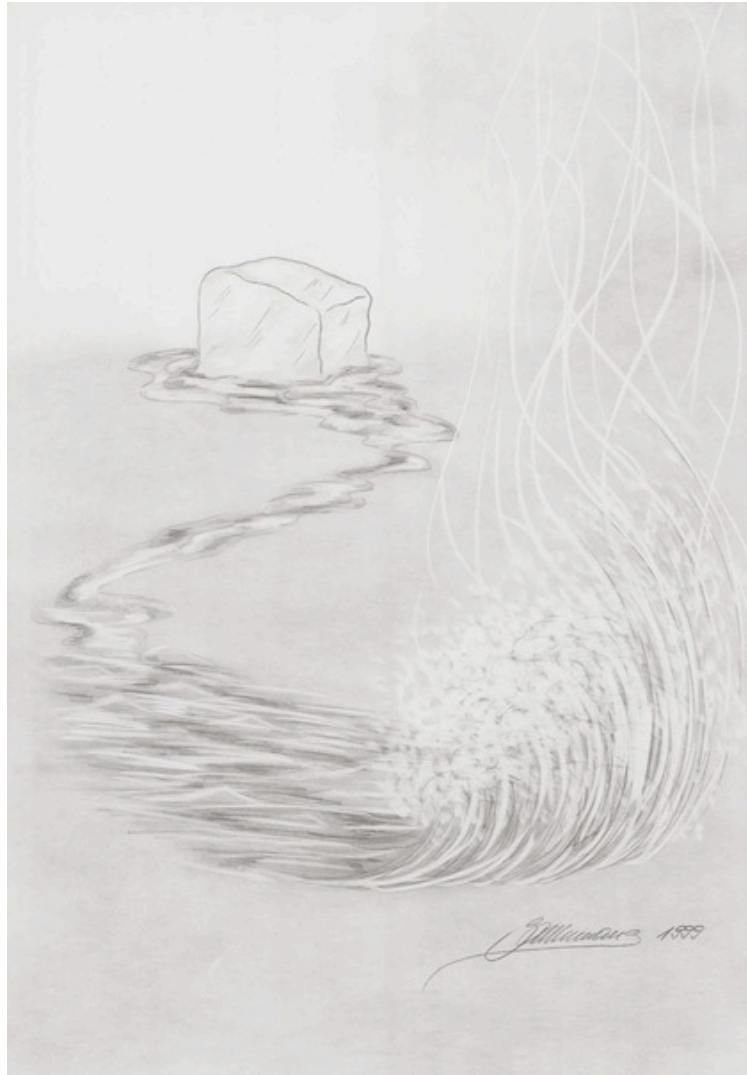
Reeds bend softly in the wind, symbolising flexibility and endurance. Here we see quiet, relaxed effectiveness in action. Gentle penetration also bodes well for new relationships. Just as a summer breeze slowly penetrates the woods to cool the forest, the ideas of a great leader slowly reach the minds and sink into the hearts of the people. When employing a force that is weak but persistent, careful aim is necessary, for only when a small force continually moves in the same direction can it have much effect.

## 58 The Joyous (lake/lake)



Unabashed joy! The image is of a carefree young girl singing to herself while engaged in her work. Cheerfulness rising within, and spreading out into the world! Joy comes into the world through gentle means, but springs from a solid inner base. The power of great joy should not be underestimated. True joy is a beacon in the world, and though it is indeed rare, its presence is an indication of great good fortune.

## 59 Dispersion (water/wind)



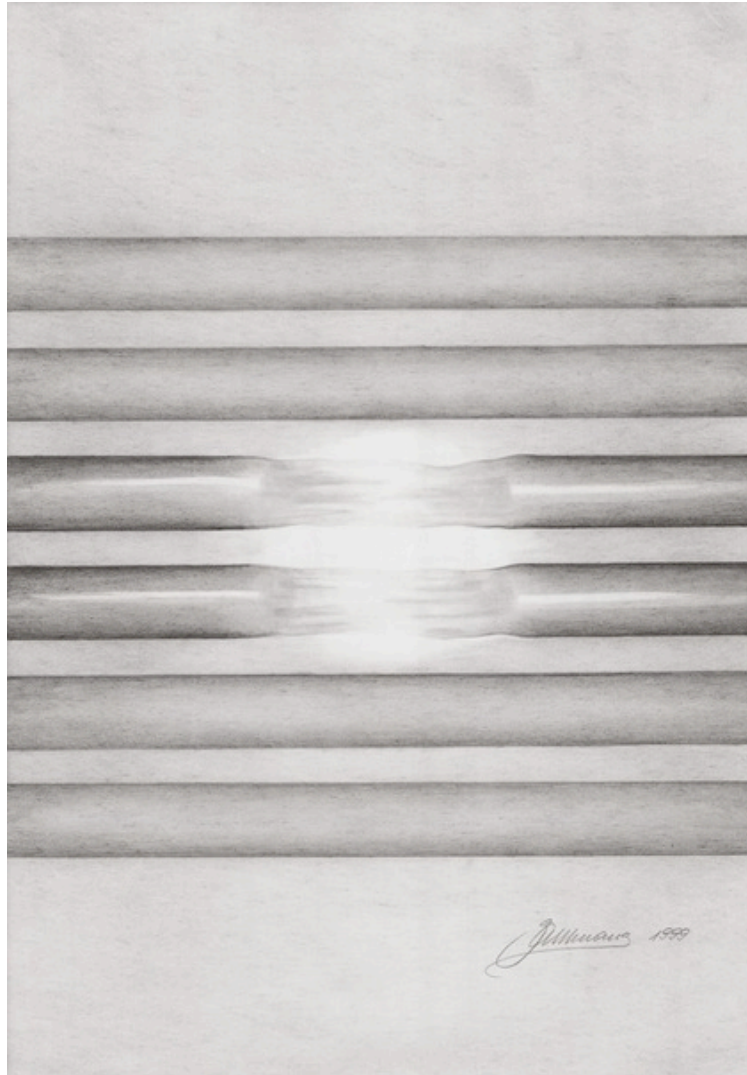
Nothing survives forever, not even the most rigid structures. The dispersion of that which has been solid is not necessarily bad: it can mean that something new is being created. The image is of ice floes, hardened in winter, dispersing in the warmth of the summer. Rigidity in the hearts of men tends to breed a separateness which can only be thawed by a greater force: typically, great religious or spiritual stirring.

## 60 Limitation (lake/water)



Limits are necessary to give purpose and direction to life. Swimming in a sea of boundless opportunity would soon lead to exhaustion. In human affairs, the making of choices implies limitation, for in choosing one road another must be abandoned. One key to a successful life is to select your limits consciously and carefully.

## 61 Inner Truth (lake/wind)



In any negotiation, the power to penetrate the truth of the other side is essential in achieving success.

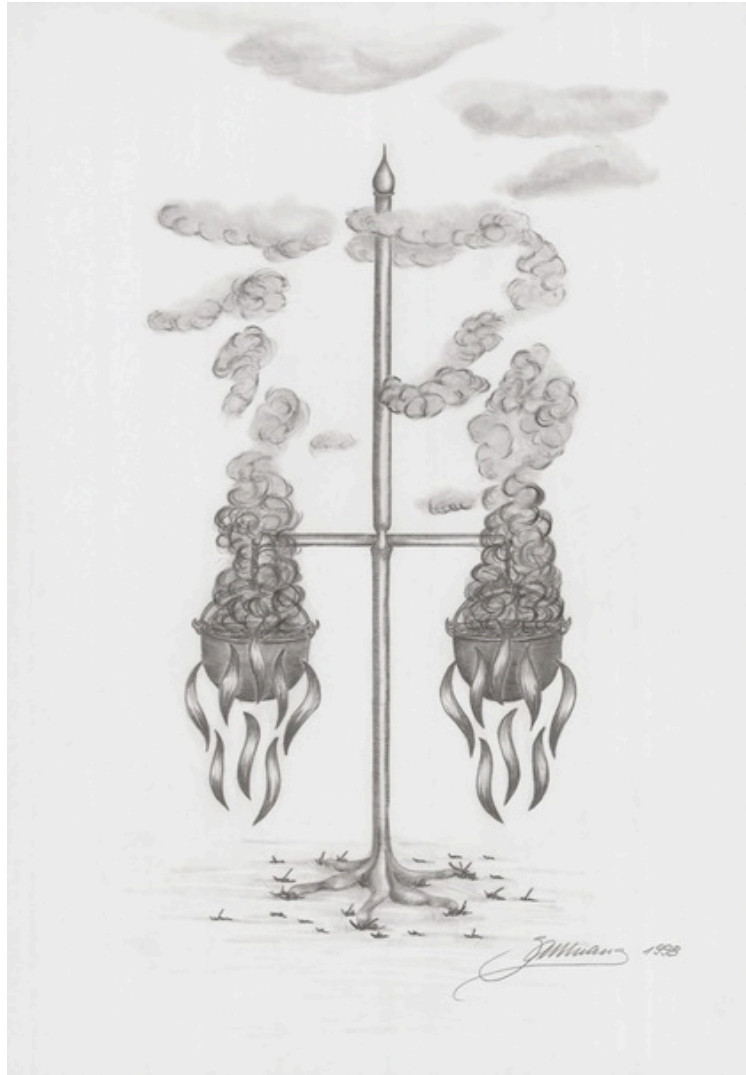
Whenever your inner life is clouded, your influence is blocked. When you are fearful, you will be attacked; when you shut out mysteries with dogma, room for new insight is eliminated. When you vacillate in upholding your principles, you will be tested. It is possible for you to influence even the most stubborn, difficult people or circumstances through the power of universal truth, to which all things naturally respond.

## 62 Small Preponderance (mountain/thunder)



Ambitious undertakings would be unwise, but attention to small matters brings progress. The image is of a person whose resources are meager, but who, through modesty and perseverance, rises to a position of prominence. The power of the small is served by slow and steady advancement, and succeeds through an honest awareness of its own limitations. Modesty stemming from recognising your limitations is a fine quality, but it can be seen as weakness if it is not accompanied by conscientiousness.

## 63 After Completion (fire/water)



Here we have a fine irony – after completion of a project or great enterprise, there is still much left to do. Completion is merely a pause in the cycle of creation and decay, a momentary stillpoint for the swinging pendulum of life. The image here is that of a kettle of water boiling over a fire. When the forces are balanced, the water boils properly; but if the pot is too full, it may boil over and put out the fire; or, if the fire is too hot, it may evaporate all the water.



## 64 Before Completion (water/fire)



The situation is incomplete, but the chaos of the past is slowly giving way to order, and the goal is in sight. The originally image is one of a young fox crossing thin ice – the way ahead is unobstructed, the goal is clear, but a wary, cautious attitude is essential. "Before Completion" is the last reading of the cycle of synchronicity. It suggests that the ever-spinning wheel of life never reaches an absolute conclusion.